

CHAPTER 7

Firefighter License

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Firefighter Licensing 7.1	Vehicle Code §15250.6(a) and §15250.6(b) mandate that any person operating firefighting equipment must have in their possession a valid driver license for the appropriate class of vehicle operated, or a valid firefighter restricted driver license for the appropriate class of vehicle.
Firefighter Definition 7.2	Vehicle Code §15250.6(f) defines a firefighter as any person employed as such, by a federal or state agency or by a regularly organized fire department of a city, county, city and county, or district, or registered as a volunteer member of a regularly organized fire department having official recognition of the city, county, city and county, or district in which the department is located. Firefighters driving Class A or B vehicles may obtain a commercial license with or without a restriction, or they may obtain a noncommercial license restricted to operating firefighting equipment only.
Fire Department Employers 7.3	<p>Fire departments are eligible for participation in the Employer Testing Program. The following applies to fire departments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employer requirements: Fire departments follow the same requirements as commercial Employers except as noted in this Chapter.• Employer Sanctions: (Warning, Suspension, Revocation, etc.) can be levied on fire departments found to be noncompliant with the Employer Testing Program provisions.• The program review section of this handbook describes program sanctions and common deficiencies that can affect your participation.
Firefighter Sanctions 7.4	Vehicle Code §15250.6(h) states that violations committed while operating firefighting equipment with a noncommercial fire fighter driver license will be regarded and treated for purposes of penalties and sanctions the same as for the operation of a commercial vehicle.

Firefighting Equipment 7.5	<p>Vehicle Code §15250.6(g) defines “firefighting equipment” as a motor vehicle used to travel to and from the scene of any emergency situation, or to transport equipment used in the control of any emergency situation, and which is owned by, or under the exclusive control of, a federal or state agency, a regularly organized fire department of a city, county, city and county, district, or a volunteer fire department having official recognition of the city, county, city and county, or district in which the department is located.</p> <p>Questions regarding vehicles should be referred to your local California Highway Patrol Office to determine the appropriate license class (Class A, Class B, or restricted firefighter’s etc.).</p> <p>Drivers who operate vehicles requiring a restricted firefighters license can apply and obtain a commercial driver license. This is especially recommended for those firefighters who may come into contact with and thus necessitate the operation of vehicles defined as commercial vehicles.</p>
Medical Requirements 7.6	<p>Firefighters who choose to obtain a commercial driver license are required to meet the same California medical standards as commercial drivers, and submit a Medical Examination (DL51).</p> <p>Firefighters who apply for a noncommercial restricted firefighters driver license can submit a Health Questionnaire (DL546) or a Medical Examination Report instead. Medical Certificates are usually valid for two years from the medical examination date. Medical Examination Reports not submitted as required will result in an invalid firefighter or commercial license status.</p>
Health Questionnaire 7.7	<p>The Health Questionnaire (DL546) is a self-certifying medical information form accepted by the department for noncommercial restricted firefighter license applicants only. A regular Medical Examination Report (DL51) is acceptable in lieu of the Health Questionnaire.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the restricted firefighter driver license applicant to submit either the Health Questionnaire or Medical Examination Report as a part of the application process. Either form can be submitted to a DMV field office or mailed to the Commercial Driver License Unit (see directory for mailing address) for updating. A Medical Examination Report Submission Reminder Letter is sent approximately 60 days prior to expiration of the DL51 or DL546.</p>

Endorsements 7.8	The appropriate endorsement(s) may be obtained on all noncommercial firefighter restricted driver license. The endorsements include; double/triples, tank, passenger, and hazardous materials.
Tank Vehicle Definition 7.9	A “Tank Vehicle” means any commercial motor vehicle that is designed to transport any liquid or gaseous material within a tank that is permanently or temporarily attached to the vehicle or the chassis, including, but not limited to, cargo tanks and portable tanks, as defined in Part 171 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations. This definition does not include portable tanks having a rated capacity under 1,000 gallons.
Portable Tanks 7.10	“Portable Tank” means any packaging designed primarily to be loaded into or temporarily attached to a vehicle, and equipped with skids, mounting, or accessories to facilitate handling of the tank by mechanical means.
Tank Endorsement 7.11	<p>Use the following definitions to determine if a tank vehicle endorsement is required on a commercial vehicle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the tank is permanently attached, no matter what the capacity of the tank is, a tank endorsement is required.• If the tank is portable and the capacity is over 1,000 gallons, a tank endorsement is required.• If the tank is portable and the capacity is less than 1,000 gallons, a tank endorsement is not required.
Tank Vehicle With Hazmat Endorsement 7.12	Tank vehicles used to store gasoline, or diesel fuel used to fuel fire trucks, are required to be operated by a driver who has either a commercial Class A or B license with a tank/hazmat endorsement, or a noncommercial firefighter driver license with any appropriate restrictions and a tank/hazmat endorsement.

Cargo Tank 7.13	<p>“Cargo Tank” means any tank having a volumetric capacity in excess of 120 gallons that is used for the transportation of flammable liquids or combustible liquids. Cargo tanks includes pumps, meters, valves, fittings, piping, and other appurtenances attached to a tank vehicle and used in connection with the flammable liquids or combustible liquids being transported in the cargo tank, except that the volumetric capacity refers to the capacity of the container portion of a cargo tank.</p> <p>Cargo tank does not include any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any tank used only to carry fuel necessary for the operation of the vehicle or any equipment of the vehicle. • Any tank containing not more than 120 gallons of residue. For purposes of this paragraph, residue means the liquid material remaining after a tank has been unloaded to the maximum extent practicable through the normal discharge opening. • Any intermodal portable tank, meeting United States Department of Transportation IM 101 or IM 102 Specification, transported as part of an interstate shipment when operated within a 25-mile radius of its ocean port or railroad terminal loading or unloading facility. • Any tank meeting the requirements of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, with a volumetric capacity of less than 500 gallons used to transport flammable or combustible liquids, except a portable tank used to transport an inhalation hazard as defined in subdivision (a) of §32101. • Any tank designated by the United States Department of Transportation as a “single ship container” or “non-reusable container,” marked and used as such, with a volumetric capacity of less than 500 gallons. • Any vehicle that is registered in any other state and is used for refueling aircraft while operating in this state pursuant to a contract with this state or the United States for the conduct of fire suppression or other emergency-related activity.
Hazmat Endorsement 7.14	<p>Firefighters operating placarded vehicles transporting Hazardous Materials are required to obtain a Hazmat Endorsement.</p>
Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus 7.15	<p>Title 13, California Code of Regulations part 1160.1(I) states that Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus transported solely for in-transit emergencies or for the safety of persons conducting loading or unloading operations are exempt from requiring placards if the gross weight of the cylinders loaded on any one vehicle does not exceed 1001 lbs., (454 Kilograms).</p>

Firefighting Restrictions 7.16	Restrictions 80 – 89 are imposed to identify unique classifications of firefighters. When a firefighter with a noncommercial Class C applies for a noncommercial Class A or Class B firefighter driver license; these drivers will require restrictions 80 or 81. Use the following to determine which restriction will be issued to their commercial driver license.		
	If the applicant has in possession ...	And applies for ...	Then the license will show ...
	Class C license	Class B firefighters license	Restriction 80 “Class B restricted to operating firefighting equipment only”
	Class C license	Class A firefighter license	Restriction 81 “Class A and B restricted to operating firefighting equipment only”
	When a firefighter has in their possession a commercial driver license or a noncommercial Class A and will be operating a firefighting vehicle; these drivers will require restrictions 82 – 89. The following applies according to each driver’s situation.		
	If the applicant has in possession ...	And applies for ...	Then the license will show ...
	Class C commercial license	Class B firefighter license	Restriction 82 “Class B restricted to operating firefighting equipment only. May drive commercial Class C”
	If the applicant has in possession ...	And applies for ...	Then the license will show ...
	Class C commercial license	Class A firefighter license	Restriction 83 “Class A and B restricted to operating firefighting equipment only. May drive commercial Class C”

Firefighting Restrictions (cont.) 7.16	Class B commercial license	Class A firefighter license	Restriction 84 “Class A restricted to operating firefighting equipment only. May drive commercial Class B”
	Noncommercial Class A	Class A or B firefighter license	Restriction 85 “Class A or B restricted to operating firefighting equipment or towing non-CDL single trailers only”
	Class B commercial with a noncommercial Class A license	Class A firefighter license	Restriction 86 “Class A restricted to operating firefighting equipment or towing non-CDL single towing only. May drive commercial Class B”
	Noncommercial Class A/commercial Class C license	Class A or B firefighter license	Restriction 87 “Class A or B restricted to operating firefighting equipment or towing a non-CDL single trailers only. May drive commercial Class C”
	If the applicant has in possession ...	And applies for ...	Then the license will show ...
	Noncommercial Class A license	Class B firefighter license	Restriction 88 “Class B restricted to operating firefighting equipment or towing non-CDL single trailers only”
	Noncommercial Class A/commercial Class C license	Class B firefighter license	Restriction 89 “Class B restricted to operating firefighting equipment or towing non-CDL single trailers only. May drive commercial Class C”

Drive Test 7.17	<p>The drive test for firefighters will be the same as for commercial driver license applicants; including the pre-trip and skills tests. See the drive test section in this manual for specific instructions.</p> <p>Reminder: On the pre-trip inspection, items not required to be inspected due to vehicle design are not to be scored.</p> <p>Example: An applicant conducting a pre-trip inspection on a commercial tractor with a fifth wheel would be expected to mention during the inspection that the fifth wheel is locked and is greased. Fire trucks are not designed with a fifth wheel; thus are not expected to mention this during the pre-trip inspection check.</p>
Drive Test Vehicle 7.18	<p>Firefighters are required to pass the drive test in a vehicle representative of the class they are applying for. Therefore, a Class B applicant may take the test in any straight truck that meets the vehicle configuration they will be licensed for. If the vehicle lacks air brakes or manual transmission, the driver will be restricted to operating a Class B vehicle without air brakes (Restriction 48) or with automatic transmission (Restriction 64).</p>
Firefighter Articulated Aerial Ladder Vehicle 7.19	<p>An articulated aerial ladder fire suppression vehicle (hook and ladder) which requires a tillerman to steer the rear of the vehicle is required to be operated by a driver who has either a commercial Class B license or a noncommercial firefighter restricted Class B license.</p> <p>The tillerman is not required to have a driver license. Vehicle Code §305 defines a driver as a person who drives or is in actual physical control of a vehicle. The term “driver” does not include the tillerman or other person who, in an auxiliary capacity, assists the driver in the steering or operation of any articulated firefighting apparatus.</p>

Written Test 7.20	Noncommercial firefighter applicants are required to take three written tests developed specifically for them. All applicants are required to take the basic Class C knowledge test. The four tests will be taken in the following situations:	
	Test	For ...
	General Knowledge	All on-CDL firefighters
	Air brakes	All applicants that will be driving firefighter vehicles equipped with air brakes. NOTE: Restriction 48 Class A and B vehicles without air brakes if the air brake written test is not taken.
	Combination	All applicants that will be driving firefighter vehicles in combination with another vehicle.
	Tank Endorsement	All applicants that will be driving firefighting vehicle with a tank.